

Belli Tells Of Ruby New Orleans Trip

By DICK BOWMAN

Jack Ruby was in New Orleans "trying to ingratiate himself with a wealthy Mafia type" at the same time Lee Harvey Oswald was there. But Ruby never knew Oswald, Melvin Belli, San Francisco attorney, said here yesterday.

"It was a coincidence, it was absolutely innocent and there was nothing sinister about it," said Belli, who defended Ruby in the Oswald slaying.

His remarks, made at a breakfast meeting of the San Diego chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalism society, came on the heels of a statement by New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison that the plot to kill Kennedy was developed in New Orleans.

Garrison was quoted as saying that a conspiracy existed in New Orleans and that arrests on conspiracy charges soon will be made.

HAS PLOT THEORY

In an interview, Belli insisted that there was no conspiracy in the Kennedy assassination, that Oswald acted alone. "I don't think any big power would pick a madman to kill the president," he added.

Belli said he thought Garrison "has done a great disservice" by not bringing the Federal Bureau of Investigation into the probe. "I'll bet that place is swarming with FBI men by now," he added.

Belli told the journalism society that he knew Ruby "had activity in New Orleans and with Cuba, but he was just trying to ingratiate himself with a wealthy Mafia type who was involved in Las Vegas gambling activities."

This was typical of Ruby's efforts to be identified with the wealthy and powerful, Belli said. "Jack Ruby liked to be with the classy.

'LIKE VILLAGE IDIOT'

"I knew this tragic little figure as well as anyone. He was like the village idiot. He was tolerated every place," even the Dallas city jail, where he shot and killed Oswald.

"There are a lot of coincidences in the Ruby case," Belli said. "In fact, the last three numbers in Ruby's autopsy file are '007.'"

Belli said Ruby was a victim



MELVIN BELLI

... speaks here

of psychomotor epilepsy and that he killed Oswald when "lights going off, flashing lights (of news cameramen) set him into an epileptic state." Ruby was attracted by the crowd around Oswald, Belli said.

Belli fully supported the Warren Commission's report. "I think the Warren Report tells all. If it doesn't, God pity us... and our processes of law."

The investigation in New Orleans, Belli said, "is not going to show anything to indicate Ruby knew Oswald."

SCORNS LANE

Belli scorned Mark Lane, author of "Rush to Judgment" (which suggests a conspiracy), as "a man of no scruples, no honesty whatsoever. He doesn't appreciate what hearsay is."

The present controversy over pretrial publicity, Belli says, stems from "excesses (of publicity) in big cases." He gave as examples the Sheppard case, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scopes Monkey Trial "and now, I guess, the Ruby case."

In the Sheppard case, Belli said, the judge was quoted as saying, "He's guilty, but we'll see he gets a fair trial."

Belli stressed, however, that pretrial publicity creates no problems in most court cases and said people forget the "magnificent day-to-day justice" of the American legal system.

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